

Alabama Emergency Management Agency And Federal Emergency Management Agency Debris Removal Quick Guide

The Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA), Public Assistance (PA) Program, is providing this information early to **avoid jeopardizing applicants' eligibility for reimbursement** from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for debris removal and disposal.

Debris includes, but is not limited to, vegetative debris, construction and demolition debris, sand, mud, silt, gravel, rocks, boulders, and vehicle and vessel wreckage. Debris must be separated for proper handling, transport and disposal of hazardous materials and toxic waste (e.g., asbestos containing materials, lead-based paints, household chemicals).

1. **The Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide** (FP 104-009-2 / April, 2018) states:
 - a. **Debris Removal** may be eligible for removal activities such as clearance, removal, and disposal, if the removal is in the public interest based on whether the work:
 - i. Eliminates immediate threats to lives, public health, and safety;
 - ii. Eliminates immediate threats of significant damage to improved public or private property;
 - iii. Ensures economic recovery of the affected community to the benefit of the community at large;
 - iv. Mitigates risk to life and property by removing Substantially Damaged structures and associated structures and appurtenances as needed to convert property acquired using HMGP funds to uses compatible with open space, recreation, or wetlands management practices. Such removal must be completed within 2 years of the declaration date unless extended by the FEMA Assistance Administrator of the Recovery Directorate.
 - b. FEMA may reimburse reasonable costs associated with debris removal, such as overtime labor, disposal fees, monitoring costs, equipment costs, material costs, or contract costs. Contracts must comply with Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (FP 104-009-2 / April 2018).

2. Eligibility Requirements

- a. You must be an **Eligible Applicant** as defined in the Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (FP 104-009-2 / April 2018) and have the legal responsibility, to be reimbursed for debris removal.
- b. Debris was generated by the disaster event and is located on your improved property or right-of-ways.

3. Permitting and Documentation Requirements

- a. Debris volume (preferred unit of measure cubic yards).
- b. Source documentation (e.g. timesheets, work logs, equipment use logs, receipts, and load tickets, monitoring logs, contracts, mutual aid agreements, GPS coordinates).
- c. Final disposal location of debris must be a permitted or approved facility by the AL Department of Environmental Management (ADEM).
- d. If using a **temporary staging area**:
 - i. Contact the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) regional office for assistance in determining site suitability, if not using pre-determined debris staging locations.
 - ii. Staging areas must be approved by ADEM, contact your local district office (<http://adem.alabama.gov>).
 - iii. Debris must not be located in floodplains, wetlands, endangered species critical habitat, or in archaeologically sensitive areas. If you are not certain if the staging area meets these

criteria, please contact the FEMA Environmental Historic Preservation at the Interim Operating Facility (IOF).

- iv. Debris must be staged a minimum of 100 feet from property boundaries, surface waters, wetlands, structures, wells, and septic tanks with leach fields.
- v. See ADEM Guidance “Storm Debris Cleanup” memorandum, May, 14, 2018 on handling storm-generated debris for additional information.

e. If **burning debris**:

- i. Only vegetative or untreated debris may be burned. See ADEM Air Quality Control Rule 335-13-1.03 for further guidance. Open burning of other construction materials is not permitted.
- ii. **A burn permit may be required and must be obtained from the AL Forestry Commission PRIOR to initiation of burning.** For information on obtaining a burn permit, contact your local county office. See ADEM “Guidelines for Open Burning of Natural Disaster Debris” July, 2016.
- iii. Storm debris stockpiled at a central location away from its origination, for the purpose of burning, will need a variance to rule 335-13-1.03 granted by **ADEM prior to burning** such piles.

4. Handling Debris

- a. Chipping or grinding is the preferred method for disposing of storm generated vegetative debris.
- b. Segregate waste types (e.g. vegetative, construction and demolition (C&D), white goods, household hazardous waste, electronic waste, animal carcasses, sand and mud, etc), if possible.
- c. Disposal of animal carcasses must be compliant with Alabama department of Agriculture and ADEM rules for handling, solid waste, and air quality.
- d. Demolition of structures may require an emergency project notification. Contact the ADEM Special Services Section/Air Division (334-271-7861) airmail@adem.alabama.gov and/or the ADEM Waste Programs Branch (334-274-4201) landmail@adem.alabama.gov .
- e. If collecting or handling asbestos materials, hazardous waste, or prohibited waste items, contact the ADEM Waste /Remediation Division District Office (334-271-7730) landmail@adem.alabama.gov.

5. Point of Contact

To coordinate your debris removal operations or for more information, please **contact Ms. Blake Pruitt (334-271-7756) or Ms. Cala Obenauf (334-271-7824)** with the ADEM Waste Approval Section.

6. More Information Online

Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (FP 104-009-2 / April 2018) may be found at:
<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/111781>

AL Department of Environmental Management solid waste handling information is available at:
<http://www.adem.state.al.us/programs/land/default.cnt>

AL Department of Environmental Management hazardous waste handling information is available at:
<http://www.adem.state.al.us/programs/land/default.cnt>